Simple Backup Options

Hello and Welcome, the information on your computer's hard disk is the most critical part of your computer, it is the only item that cannot be replaced. It is you photos, music and movies were talking about here. It may be inconvenient and expensive to replace a computer, monitor or processor, but there is no replacing data once it is lost. You are no longer simply at risk of a hard drive failure, the threat of internet viruses has become an increasing risk to data loss or corruption. Five common methods of backing up data are:

USB Flash Drives

The storage capacity of flash drives has increased significantly over the last couple of years; sizes tend to be between 1Gb to 16Gb or even 128Gb. Full backups are obviously not an option for most users, but they may be used to store important files to be saved or transported to another location.

CD and DVD Writers/Re-Writers

The falling prices of CD and DVD writers/re-writers have made them fairly standard in most new computers. The main limitation of using a CD/DVD writer for data backups is that the discs are generally limited to a capacity of about 700Mb for CD and 4.7Gb(4700Mb) for DVD Discs. Not nearly enough for a full backup, but enough for backing up your important files.

External Hard Drives

As the name implies, external hard drives are generally the same type of drive you might find inside your system, but housed in a smaller, prettier external enclosure of its own. The capacity is only limited by the size of hard drives presently available and the user's budget, this is the preferred choice by far, for its ease of use portability and accessibility.

Additional Hard Drives

By simply adding an additional hard drive to you system, you can protect yourself from data loss by copying it from your primary drive to your secondary drive. The two hard drives can even be setup to mirror one another in real time. If one hard drive should ever fail, the system won't miss a beat by continuing to run on the remaining good drive, and alert the user that the other drive needs replacing.

Online Backup Services

Online backup services, allow users to upload their files to a server for safe keeping. Although it may be convenient to have the data available wherever an internet connection is available, there are a few limitations. The services generally charge a monthly fee relative to the amount of storage space required which can be quite costly. Security is supposed to be very tight on these services, but no matter how secure it may seem, it is still just a password keeping prying eyes from your potentially sensitive documents. Also what happens if they get infected with a virus and it corrupts all of your data, is it lost? The speed of your internet connection will also weigh heavily on the convenience of your backup, and no matter what type of connection you have; it can't compete with local data transfer rates.There are a lot of questions you need to ask before you can be sure that putting your data online is the right solution for you.

Although this is not an exhaustive list of options available for backing up your data, the items listed provide some simple and relatively affordable means to ensure that your data is not lost. Data loss is an extremely frustrating and potentially costly problem, but it is one that can be avoided by backing up.

Happy Computing!